

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 10, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President McCarthy called the City Council Meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

**PRAYER**

Council Member Lyons led those present in a short prayer.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Council Member Blunt led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

City Clerk Hudson called the roll.

The following members were present:

131<sup>st</sup> District: Denese Taylor-Moye  
132<sup>nd</sup> District: John Olson, M. Evette Brantley  
133<sup>rd</sup> District: Thomas McCarthy  
134<sup>th</sup> District: Michelle Lyons, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia  
135<sup>th</sup> District: Richard Bonney, Warren Blunt  
136<sup>th</sup> District: Angel dePara  
137<sup>th</sup> District: Manuel Ayala  
138<sup>th</sup> District: Richard Paoletto,  
139<sup>th</sup> District: Andre Baker, James Holloway

A quorum was present.

Council President McCarthy announced that Council Member Brannelly had a death in the family, Council Members Martinez and Curwen were absent due to medical issues and Council Member Silva had a scheduling conflict.

**PUBLIC HEARING.**

**161-11 Public Hearing relative to the Establishment of an Annual Fixed Tax Payment for real property located at 1366 Railroad Avenue, Bridgeport Fuel Cell Park.**

Council President McCarthy called the public hearing to order at 7:17 p.m.

Council President McCarthy asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of Agenda Item 161-11 Public Hearing relative to the Establishment of an Annual Fixed Tax Payment for real property located at 1366 Railroad Avenue, Bridgeport Fuel Cell Park. No one came forward. Council President McCarthy asked again asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of Agenda Item. No one came forward. He asked a third time if there was anyone present to speak in favor of Agenda Item. No one came forward.

Council President McCarthy asked if there was anyone present to speak in opposition to Agenda Item 161-11 Public Hearing relative to the Establishment of an Annual Fixed Tax Payment for real property located at 1366 Railroad Avenue, Bridgeport Fuel Cell Park. No one came forward. He asked again asked if there was anyone present to speak in opposition to the Agenda Item. No one came forward. Council President McCarthy asked a third time if there was anyone present to speak in opposition to the Agenda Item.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON AGENDA ITEM 161-11.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON AGENDA ITEM 161-11 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The public hearing on Agenda Item 161-11 was closed at 7:18 p.m.

**COMMUNICATIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEES:**

**08-12 Communication from OPED re: Proposed Resolution of the City Council regarding the Extension of the Duration of Controls of the Congress Plaza NDP Area No. 2 Urban Renewal Plan, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO REFER AGENDA ITEM 08-12 COMMUNICATION FROM OPED RE: PROPOSED RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE EXTENSION OF THE DURATION OF CONTROLS OF THE CONGRESS PLAZA NDP AREA NO. 2 URBAN RENEWAL PLAN, REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON (CONSENT CALENDAR):**

**\*162-11 Ordinance Committee Report re: Amendments to the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 15.08 Building Permits and Fees amend Section 15.08.010(A) Building permit and related fees.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEM AS THE CONSENT CALENDAR:**

**162-11 ORDINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT RE: AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 15.08 BUILDING PERMITS AND FEES AMEND SECTION 15.08.010(A) BUILDING PERMIT AND RELATED FEES.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR PASSED AS PRESENTED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**161-11 Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee Report re: Resolution Authorizing the Establishment of an Annual Fixed Tax Payment on real property at 1366 Railroad Avenue, Bridgeport Fuel Cell Park.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER Brantley MOVED AGENDA ITEM 161-11.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

Council Member Olson said that voting against this would be like voting against motherhood. He said that he noticed for the record that only three of the seven members of the Ordinance Committee had been present to vote to bring the item to the floor. He said that approving this item would bring 65 million dollars to the City and that it would be using some currently vacant land. However, it was difficult for him to understand the \$250,000 yearly payment when he recently sold his house for an amount that was almost within \$100,000 of the yearly payment. He said that someone would be making a significant amount of money, but it wouldn't be Bridgeport.

Council President McCarthy explained that the start up for this plant is significant, but that the \$250,000 is the tax revenue on a vacant parcel. This green energy will help the City move forward.

Council Member dePara said that he had some questions about how the amount of \$250,000 had been determined. Mr. David Kooris, the OPED Director, came forward and said that there was a pro forma analysis done on the property. Mr. Bill Coleman, the OPED Neighborhood Development staff member, said that this project was part of a State project and part of 150 megawatt green energy project. This particular project is one of the initial pieces.

Mr. Coleman then reviewed the figures involved and how the Return on Investment along with the cost of development were calculated. Mr. Kooris said that one issue was that the City had compared the tax revenue from the fuel cell plant compared to other types of uses on the site.

Council Member dePara asked why the terms of the contract was 17 years. Mr. Kooris reviewed the details and said that construction will take 2 years. After 15 years, the City will review the contract and decided whether to continue with the firm. Council Member dePara said that with the rising cost of electricity, he had difficulty imagining how this would work. He said that he was having difficulty justifying the amount of \$250,000 per year for 17 years would be adequate.

Mr. Kooris then gave an overview of how Bridgeport would become the premiere site for how fuel cells work in the field. Discussion followed the details.

Council Member dePara asked why the evaluation would not be done after 5 years. Mr. Kooris said that during the 15 years, the operating costs would not change over the term of the contract.

Council Member Holloway then said that he had been on the Energy Steering Committee since 1998 and that the City was trying to get away from energy from other countries. He then spoke about the high pressure gas line that come to the City from New Orleans, Louisiana. However, the gas line is underground, so there are no taxes generated. The high voltage electric line that goes through the City is also underground. UI, CL&P and other utilities also have their lines underground. He said that this facility would pay taxes.

Council Member Brantley thanked Council Member Holloway for his information. She then said the fact that four Committee members were not present was not necessarily an indication that the Council Members were not in support. She added that the Council Members were encouraged to attend Committee meetings so that their concerns can be discussed by all.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the company that would be in charge of the fuel cell park, if there was something in the contract regarding if they chose not to renew, that someone would clean up the park. Mr. Kooris said that there have been assurances that the property would be left in good condition even if it was before the 17 years were up.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked for more details about the 17 year contract, which Mr. Kooris answered.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like the investors who come into Bridgeport to see the fuel cell park to also invest in Bridgeport. Mr. Kooris said that he hoped to interest the investors in other Bridgeport projects.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked about the break out of taxes, which Mr. Kooris reviewed with her.

Council Member Lyons said that she wanted to point out that this property was a brown field. Bridgeport is always looking for people to clean up the brown fields and this company was willing to clean up the brown field. Council Member Lyons said that she thought that people would come to Bridgeport just to see the park and that is positive in itself. Clean energy is something that Bridgeport needs. The park will not give off a smell, noise or be a problem for the City.

Council Member dePara asked if the City would be supporting the fuel cell park. Mr. Frank Wolak of Fuel Cell in Danbury came forward to answer questions. Council Member dePara asked how \$250,000 per year the best that could be achieved. Mr. Wolak said that the economics of the project are set by the contract.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 161-11 ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT RE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ANNUAL FIXED TAX PAYMENT ON REAL PROPERTY AT 1366 RAILROAD AVENUE, BRIDGEPORT FUEL CELL PARK PASSED WITH TWELVE IN FAVOR (TAYLOR-MOYE, BRANTLEY, MCCARTHY, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, BONNEY, BLUNT, DEPARA, AYALA, PAOLETTO, BAKER AND HOLLOWAY) AND ONE OPPOSED (OLSON).**

#### **ADJOURNMENT.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport  
City Council  
Special Meeting  
December 10, 2012